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## Correspondence.

## THE "MADONNA DEI CANDELABRI."

SIR: I have just read in THE ART AMATEUR of February the article on the "Madonna dei Candelabri." How is it that your engraving and description vary so much from those in the book published in 1869 by Bell & Daldy, entitled "The Great Works of Raphael Sanzio, of Urbino?" In this book, expensively gotten up, the Madonna is really unsupported by any angels whatever; and as to candelabri this would be an impropriety, as there is only one candelabrum. Yet this picture purports to be of Mr. Munro's property, his Madonna in the Munro collection.

ANSWER.—Our correspondent seems to have overlooked the following sentence in the article on the "Madonna dei Candelabri" in THE ART AMATEUR for February: "In several of the engravings that have been made from this picture, the angels have been omitted, but this is due only to a whim of the engravers." We have not access to the book alluded to, published by Bell & Daldy, but the above sentence contains the easy explanation of the discrepancy complained of. The "Madonna dei Candelabri" has been engraved according to Passavant, ten times, and Mr. J. C. Robinson describes four additional engravings, not mentioned by Passavant. In three of these fourteen copies the angels are omitted, and in one of them, that of A. Bridoux, engraved in 1841, the angels are omitted, but a candelabrum is placed at the right. It is likely that the engraving in Bell & Daldy's book is taken from this of Bridoux. The process by which books of this description are manufactured is universally the same. The publisher gets hold of a number of plates available for his purpose of making a showy gift-book and some writer is employed to prepare a text. Of course his descriptions correspond to the prints he is describing. For many years, ever since it left the Borghese gallery, in fact, the picture in question has been in private hands, and has been seen by very few persons. It has been known to the public mainly through the engravings that have been made of it; the writer in Bell & Daldy's book had, doubtless, never seen the picture itself; had he seen it, he would certainly have felt bound to point out the fact that the engraving he was describing differed essentially from the original picture. Mr. J. C. Robinson, speaking of the prints made from this Madonna, says: "Although they display the most curious variations when compared one with another, it would seem that they were all, either directly or indirectly, taken from the Novar (Borghese) picture, and that the variations, some of which are certainly somewhat perplexing, have resulted mainly from mere vagaries of the individual engravers desirous of producing popular and salable prints, and little solicitous as to the exact rendering of the prototype."

## THE USE OF BITUMEN.

SIR: Is it a common or a good practice, in painting in oil, to lay in the subject first in bitumen to get light and shade effect, and then to give the color by washing over with the "lakes" and madders? E. C. D., White Plains, N. Y.

ANSWER.—This manner of laying in with bitumen is not a good or safe method of working, though it is sometimes employed by artists of the Munich school, to get a quick, strong effect, but the bitumen will turn black and crack with time, and is in every way an unsafe color. It is, however, perfectly allowable to lay in the picture with burnt Sienna and black, using turpentine as a medium for the first painting only. This will preserve the drawing and keep the masses of light and shade distinct. When dry, this should be followed by a solid painting of the general tones of the picture. No washing over of lakes or madders should be attempted. Painting thinly should always be avoided.

## THE COMPOSITION OF ANTIQUE BRONZE.

S. P. Q. R.—Authorities differ as to the proportions of copper and tin, or other metals used in the bronzes of the ancients. The Corinthian bronzes of the Greek artists were probably the results of different proportions of white and red or yellow metal. Different colors have been produced by the admixture of various proportions of gold or copper. Japanese bronze, for example, varies from a deep red to the color of tin, and it is known that the Japanese used the precious metals in their production. The Greek artists had a bronze they called "hepatizon," of a reddish liver-like color.

## SOME QUERIES ABOUT CHINA PAINTING.

SIR: (1) Can you tell me what color to use in china painting to produce the deep, rich indigo blue seen on foreign wares? I believe Mr. Bennett, of New York, uses it also. (2) I painted a plaque with a design of pink flowers (carmine No. 1), on a blue and black ground (deep blue and ivory black, one third flux), and had it fired in New York. The pink took a good glaze, but has mostly scaled off, while the ground has no glaze, and looks as dead as when first painted. I also painted another exactly like it, and had it fired in Boston, and it has come out satisfactorily. Will you tell me why the New York firing was a failure? (3) When the paint scales in the first firing, is there any

way of repairing it? (4) Do repeated firings (two or three) make china more brittle? M., Newburyport.

ANSWER.—(1) For underglaze painting, pure cobalt may be used. For overglaze, the only thing we know of, obtainable in this country, is royal blue, which may be had of Wm. Lycett, 23 Union Square. (2) It is impossible to tell without an examination of the spoiled plaque. There was probably some fault in the application of the ground, and in endeavoring to bring out the glaze on that the carmine was over-fired, and thus made to scale off. (3) The place may be touched up with oil colors mixed with damar varnish; but, of course, the work cannot be refired, and the result is never satisfactory. It is always better to have the paint cleaned off, and then repaint the design. (4) No.

## HOW TO "FIX" A DRAWING WITH MILK.

STUDENT, Rochester, N. Y.—There is no objection to using milk for "fixing" your chalk drawings if proper care is used. Skimmed new milk diluted with a little water is best. If used too strong it will dull the drawing, if too weak, the drawing will still be liable to rub. The drawing must be fastened to a board with drawing pins; hold the board in an inclined position over a dish or other similar vessel, and pour clean water all over the drawing, first wetting low down, and proceeding upward in horizontal rows, taking care that the whole of the paper is wetted. Let the moisture drain off, and, while the paper is still wet, pour on the milk, beginning at the top and taking care that the entire paper be covered with it. It is not necessary to slope the drawing when using the milk; it may be laid on a table, and by giving it a slight inclination in different directions after the milk has been poured on, the whole of the paper may be covered. The use of wetting the drawing with water is to remove any loose particles that would injure the effect of the drawing if they were suffered to remain; and the wetting is begun at the bottom of the paper, because the loose particles will flow off the wet surface, but would adhere to a dry one. If the wetting were begun high up, the drossy particles would form streaks, by which the drawing would be injured.

## ADVICE AS TO DECORATION.

SIR: In your interesting paper you frequently give hints on the decoration of drawing and dining-rooms, etc., few of which can be applied to the bedroom. Being a junior member of a family, my bedroom is also my sanctum sanctorum, and wishing to decorate it in an artistic manner, I apply to you for some hints. Could you suggest something that I could carry out myself by degrees? My room is the ordinary bedroom, 12 x 15, with a door on one side, a window opposite, and a fire-place at the end. Would you recommend a certain style, viz.: Arabic, Japanese, etc., or would you decorate it in the colors of a peacock's feather, and if so, how ought the colors to be distributed? Would an overmantel be out of place in a bedroom? I thought of having a frieze round the room with the motto, "Early to bed," etc., on it, but could think of no good design for carrying it out; could you suggest any? Being a man, I shall have to depend on the brush, and not the needle, for the beautifying of my room. DIOGENES, Toronto, Can.

ANSWER.—We would recommend that the room be treated in the present quiet English style (English Renaissance, as exemplified by the productions of Morris & Co., of London.) Tint the ceiling with light sage green; have the cornice old oak brown, the wall paper frieze three feet deep, of golden olive tone, with picture moulding at the base of the same; the wall below the frieze papered a dull neutral green approaching the sage tint. Have no gold in the paper. Surbase should be black, and the rest of the wood-work paint a dull, dark, reddish brown. The overmantel would look well in antique mahogany or ebonized cherry.

HARRY S. T., Springfield, Ill.—Write to Scribner & Welford, Broadway, New York; or Cassell, Petter, Galpin & Co., for their catalogues. The following you will find useful works: "Accessory Ornament," by Lewis F. Day; "Decorative Painting of the Middle Ages," by W. & G. Audsley; "Studies in Design," by Dr. Dresser.

AMANDA, Sacramento, Cal.—(1) If floors are good it is best to have them stained and wax-finished; all cracks and openings to be well puttied with colored putty. The cheapest parquet carpeting costs about \$1.00 per foot laid. (2) Send to Brush & Co., 7 West Fourteenth Street, for further particulars. (3) We buy such designs, but at present do not need any.

MRS. E. E. L., Greenfield, Mass.—(1) The best lining for dark green curtains would be greenish old gold material, say sateen or a lining silk. (2) Diagonal serge would make good curtains, and would not fade more than other materials. (3) Inside curtains should be used in connection with it of "Madras," or similar stuff.

## SUNDRY QUERIES ANSWERED.

SIR: (1) Is there any preparation which may be used in painting on satin in water-colors to prevent the paint from running? (2) Should warm or cold sepia be used in shading wild roses? A. W. I., Washington, D. C.

ANSWER.—In order to prevent the paint from spreading, cover the whole groundwork of the design, after carefully outlining it, with a preparation of diluted gum arabic. After this, it is well to go over the same, within the outlines, with a coating of Chinese

white. If this is properly done the colors will not spread. (2) In shading wild roses use the ordinary sepia with the addition of a little black mixed with rose-madder.

SUE M. A., Lexington, Mo.—(1) F. W. Devoe & Co., Fulton St., New York, sell a special glaze for painting pottery in oil colors, which becomes hardened, and tolerably durable, by being subjected to the heat of an ordinary oven. Of course, this is not a legitimate way of ceramic painting, but it seems to be practised a good deal in out of the way towns and villages, where there are no kilns for firing pottery regularly painted with mineral colors. (2) No. The process cannot be safely applied to water-color work. (3) We will try to give soon a design for a mirror-frame as you suggest.

P. S., Boston.—If you do not find in the pages of monograms we are now publishing in THE ART AMATEUR the combination you need, write to Ellis C. Marks, 23 Union Square, New York, who will furnish whatever you may require in this way, or in heraldic designing, on reasonable terms.

SUBSCRIBER, San Francisco.—We believe there is no book on ribbon work. The Decorative Art Society in this city teaches it, and your best plan will be to send to them for a piece already begun.

H. A., Greens Farms, Conn.—For painting in water colors, either landscapes or figures, the following list of colors is sufficient: Chinese white, yellow ochre, vermilion, light red, rose madder, gamboge, cobalt, Prussian blue, sepia, Vandyck brown, black, burnt Sienna, zinobor green.

W. M., Albion, N. Y.—Schumacher & Ettlinger, of Bleecker Street, New York, advertised recently for designs for holiday cards. L. Prang & Co., of Boston, also buy good original designs.

F. K., Philadelphia.—The vases illustrated in our article on Volkmar faience are of Mr. Volkmar's own make. His address is Tremont, New York City.

MARIAN A. T., Charlestown, Mass.—(1.) We do not know the picture "Mother's Consolation," by W. Amberg, and cannot say whether or not it has been engraved.

L. C. R., Kansas City.—"Doulton" is pronounced "Dole-ton."

K. T. W., New York.—(1) Whatman's drawing paper is best for crayon work. (2) We shall publish instructions for crayon drawing in our June number.

## TREATMENT OF THE SUPPLEMENT DESIGNS.

PLATE CCXLVIII. is a design for a Byzantine vase—"Oak Leaves." For the background, mix two parts brown No. 3 with one part orange-yellow, thinned with turpentine, and four or five drops of lavender oil. This tint, when put on must be no stronger than café au lait in tone. Holding the vase by the handle, wash on the color with a blender or very broad brush, so delicately and evenly, that when partly dry the vase can be dabbed and the groundwork made a rich cream color. It is better to have the vase fired before the design is drawn on it, as the slightest touch will mar the even background. After firing, draw the design in India ink. Paint the leaves in brown-green, putting in the shadows in the same color. For the stems and the branch, use one part brown No. 17, and one part brown-green. Outline and vein the leaves in gold. For the conventional pattern at the top and bottom of the vase, paint the leaf in the same brown-green, the lines in gold. The firer will do the gold work, if desired. The handle can be painted after the first firing in background tint.

Plate CCXLIX. is the first of a series of wild-flower designs for desert plates. These designs are to be treated conventionally, that is, the colors applied in flat, even washes, and the whole pattern distinctly outlined with black, or very dark, color. Purple mixed with dark brown, may be used for outlining. The background should be clear, even tints. The circle in center should also be distinctly outlined. It may be filled in as shown in the design, or left vacant (as in the small design), or a monogram may be placed in it. In painting this design—"Wild Roses"—use for the outside of the petals a thin wash of carmine No. 2; for the face of the flower a deeper wash of the same color; for the centre of the flower, silver-yellow with orange-yellow, and sepia dots, centre dot carmine; for the under side of the leaves, light yellow-green (yellow, apple-green and brown-green); for upper side of the leaves darker green (yellow, emerald-green, brown-green); for the stems, brown. For the background, use celadon. Outline distinctly.

Plate CCL. is a second series of monograms of A combined with other letters of the alphabet.

Plate CCLI. is a plant design—"Aristolochia Vine"—for panel decoration, taken directly from nature.

Plate CCLII. is a collection of designs for inlaid metal-work and stencilling.

Plate CCLIII. gives two South Kensington border designs to be embrodered in two or three shades of blues or reds.

Plate CCLIV. gives four examples of ecclesiastical embroidery—maniples taken from sculptures in the south porch of the Cathedral of Chartres.

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